



# WOMEN SUPPORTING WOMEN

ANNUALREPORT**2017**





# Letter from the Executive Director

For many of us, 2017 was not an easy year. Politics and the public space were often occupied with very difficult news that challenged our community and spirits on multiple fronts. We saw the ascendance of public figures who do not have the best interests of our community at heart. Yet, despite, or perhaps because of this environment, 2017 was a very important year for women. It was the year that all of the stories of injustice, harassment, and criminality finally broke through the dam. It was the year that women declared “enough is enough” and people listened. It was the year #metoo and #timesup went viral. It was the year that women would no longer stay silent about the harassment, assaults, and discrimination we had experienced across age, race, geography, socio-economics, and education. It was the year we announced that we will never go back.

At The Well Project we are honored to witness the impact of powerful women’s voices every day and we are proud to be part of a legacy of formidable female voices and action. As a women-run and women-focused organization, we believe strongly in the collective power of women joining forces, building community, and lifting each other up. That is why The Well Project is committed to **every woman**. That means that we are dedicated to addressing:

- **Every woman in all our diversity:** be it sexual orientation, gender identity, race, ethnicity, geography, age, education level, etc.
- **Every woman in all our roles:** women wear so many hats, including caregiver, advocate, provider, partner, and woman living with HIV
- **Every woman with every stage of need:** we provide information, community, and advocacy to women throughout the spectrum of need, from those seeking information on HIV prevention, to newly diagnosed women, to seasoned advocates, and long-term survivors
- **Every woman who has a role to play in ending the HIV epidemic:** we are working to arm everyone with the information they need, including community advocates, activists, care providers, policymakers, and researchers

In the 2017 Annual Report, we are eager to share updates about our activities over the past year, but I want to highlight one effort of which I am particularly proud. In April 2017, The Well Project endorsed “Undetectable Equals Untransmittable” (U=U), a consensus statement by the Prevention Access Campaign. The Well Project has long advocated that HIV-related stigma is the biggest obstacle to ending the HIV epidemic and we have worked tirelessly to break down that stigma by providing access to information, community support, and advocacy. We believe that increasing awareness that having an undetectable viral load means that people living with HIV will not transmit the virus can have a dramatic impact on public and personal perceptions of HIV. The U=U campaign is an extraordinarily powerful tool with the potential to address all levels of HIV stigma, including institutional, interpersonal, and internalized stigma. We see this information



having a significant impact on the epidemic—empowering people living with HIV on a personal level, decreasing HIV transmission, and increasing access to HIV treatment.

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*The U=U campaign is an extraordinarily powerful tool with the potential to address all levels of HIV stigma, including institutional, interpersonal, and internalized stigma.*

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In our mission to change the course of the HIV/AIDS pandemic through a unique and comprehensive focus on women and girls, we are committed to supporting and disseminating the U=U message through our diverse resources. Since endorsing the campaign, we have created fact sheets and slide decks in both English and Spanish, presented about the campaign online and in-person, and spread this important message through other resources. If you don't know about U=U, please check out our resources on the topic by clicking [here](#) and [here](#). We are honored to be part of a campaign that is providing people living with HIV renewed hope for a life free from stigma.

To all of you who play a role in making The Well Project what it is, we are so grateful for your efforts and support. A special thanks to our team, community advisory board, bloggers, funders, donors, partners, and everyone one of you who access our resources for #information, #community support, and #advocacy training. **Together, we can change the course of the HIV epidemic...one woman at a time.**



Krista Martel  
Executive Director

#everywoman





**“ The Well Project’s  
unique online platform  
has unlimited potential  
to provide women  
across the globe with  
important information,  
facilitate networking and  
community support, and  
advance advocacy and  
capacity-building among  
women living with HIV.”**

*-- Judith D. Auerbach, PhD, board co-chair*



# MISSION AND VISION

**The Well Project is a non-profit organization that was founded in 2002 with the mission of changing the course of the HIV/AIDS pandemic** through a unique and comprehensive focus on women and girls. The Well Project is the leading organization addressing issues related to women living with HIV (WLHIV), including increasing HIV awareness, expanding treatment research, promoting better standards of care, educating women how to manage living with HIV, and providing a support community of WLHIV. Focusing on three critical areas related to women and HIV—information access, community support, and advocacy—The Well Project is leveraging technology to dramatically improve health outcomes and quality of life for WLHIV.

## INFORMATION ACCESS

Providing global access to lifesaving, relevant, and culturally competent information to women affected by HIV is the cornerstone of The Well Project's programming. We maintain the largest, most comprehensive library of **educational fact sheets on HIV and women**. These 110+ fact sheets (including a growing portion available in Spanish) address a wide range of issues related to HIV and women's health and help improve **health literacy**, increase **patient-provider communications** and **engagement in healthcare**, and improve overall **health outcomes**. We recently created a library of slide decks that advocates can use to share information with others in their communities.

## COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Based on our belief that stigma is the single largest barrier to ending the HIV pandemic, we are committed to implementing **programs and resources that break down stigma, shame, and isolation**. Through our online platform and social media networks, The Well Project has created a safe space for WLHIV to share their experiences, connect with others, and build a strong community. Our English and Spanish blogs, *A Girl Like Me* and *Una Chica Como Yo*, offer a unique **sisterhood and vibrant community of support** for WLHIV from diverse backgrounds who have found commonalities through their shared experiences. For more information about *A Girl Like Me* and *Una Chica Como Yo*, please see page 7.

## ADVOCACY

The Well Project enhances **health literacy** and **agency** among WLHIV through our **treatment advocacy training, capacity building, and leadership programming**. Our webinar series highlights the basics of HIV science and treatment, trains women how to become HIV treatment advocates, and addresses issues related to HIV prevention, transmission, sexual and reproductive health, and mental health. We participate in and present at scientific, advocacy, and policy conferences, and provide support for our bloggers and community advisory board to attend. Our Women's Research Initiative on HIV/AIDS (WRI) focuses on **elevating, enhancing, and expediting HIV treatment and prevention research on women** and identifying gaps in clinical care and research.

#missionandvision





## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Produced and launched our most comprehensive survey report to date, *Your Voice Counts: 2016 User Survey Report*, which highlighted the impact of The Well Project's resources on women living with HIV, as well as the issues most affecting them
- Developed 3 new fact sheets based on recommendations from our Community Advisory Board (CAB) including "Trans Women: HIV Prevention as a Priority," "Undetectable= Untransmittable: Building Hope and Ending HIV Stigma," and "Why Language Matters: Facing HIV Stigma in Our Own Words"
- Translated 5 new fact sheets into Spanish; reviewed and updated 8 current fact sheets for medical accuracy and relevance
- Presented the posters *Looking Beyond Viral Suppression: Findings from The Well Project's 2016 User Survey on Factors Influencing the Health, Well-being, and Quality of Life of Women Living with HIV* at IAS 2017 and *Leveraging Web-based Technologies to Improve the Health, Well-being, and Quality of Life of Women Living with HIV: Findings from The Well Project's 2016 User Survey* at IAPAC 2017
- Participated in major HIV conferences including IAS 2017, Adherence 2017, USCA, AIDSWatch, and Iris House Women as the Face of AIDS Summit
- Provided scholarship support to 7 CAB members to attend meetings including the Iris House Summit, USCA, AIDSWatch, ICASA 2017, Florida Department of Health conference, schools/universities and regional events, expanding The Well Project's conference presence
- Executed third year of *WATCH!* treatment advocacy webinar series, hosting 3 webinars with 9 expert speakers and nearly 400 participants
- Compared to the prior year, 2017 saw the following increases in our web traffic:
  - Page views by 94%
  - Unique users by 116%
  - Organic traffic by 366%; direct traffic by 241%
  - U.S. users by 84%, with top states mirroring those with largest numbers of women living with HIV
- Added 4 new partners: Project Inform, Prevention Access Campaign (U=U), AIDS Foundation of Chicago, Arianna's Center
- Initiated development of new outreach program, Building H.O.P.E.
- Disseminated quarterly email updates to 20+ organizational partners
- Continued supporting 3 women living with HIV, who serve as global ambassadors and communications coordinator for The Well Project
- Recruited 2 new community advisory board members representing key populations
- Recruited 2 new members to our board of directors
- Developed and distributed new outreach materials



## And More!

Reviewed & updated  
**>100 FACT SHEETS**  
on HIV & women's health

**>2.5 MILLION  
REACHED**  
with online content + social media

**PUBLISHED >80 BLOGS**  
on *A Girl Like Me* and *Una Chica Como Yo*



267 POSTS  
**518,800 IMPRESSIONS**



491 TWEETS  
**292,000 IMPRESSIONS**

Created  
slide library  
featuring  
**28**  
**SLIDE SETS**  
of most-accessed  
**FACT SHEETS**

**ADDED**

**TEN NEW  
BLOGGERS**

### TOP 10 COUNTRIES REACHED BY THE WELL PROJECT

- |                  |                   |
|------------------|-------------------|
| 1. United States | 6. United Kingdom |
| 2. India         | 7. Nigeria        |
| 3. Philippines   | 8. Spain          |
| 4. South Africa  | 9. Canada         |
| 5. Mexico        | 10. Australia     |

**SEVENTEEN  
NEWSLETTERS**

**=935,000  
IMPRESSIONS**

### TOP 5 FACT SHEETS IN 2017

1. What are HIV & AIDS?
2. Sexually Transmitted Infections or Diseases (STIs or STDs)
3. Oral Sex: What's the Real Risk? (Spanish)
4. HIV Transmission
5. HIV-Related Pain

#successes





**“ Blogging has helped me incredibly. I mostly isolate, but being able to share my journey with the readers in hope to inspire just one woman makes me want to fight like a girl to reach all women who otherwise may feel totally beat with no hope. I came to blogging a broken girl, and through blogging I have wrestled some of the demons from their powers over me.”**

*-- A Girl Like Me blogger*



## SPOTLIGHT ON:

# A Girl Like Me and Una Chica Como Yo

**The Well Project created and launched one of our most beloved resources, *A Girl Like Me (AGLM)* in October 2009** with the goal of increasing awareness of and decreasing stigma for women and girls living with HIV. What began with a handful of blogs from a few women bloggers has evolved into something much bigger and much more profound: *AGLM* has become a unique sisterhood and vibrant community of support of women living with HIV from diverse experiences who find commonalities through their shared experiences.

While millions of women around their globe are living with HIV, many continue to feel alone in their HIV diagnosis and isolated in their experiences. *AGLM* aims to normalize HIV in women and girls and to create a space for women living with HIV from around the world to speak out. Bloggers share everyday life experiences, including those related to HIV, but also those that all women face in their daily lives.

Importantly, *AGLM* and *Una Chica Como Yo (UCCY)*, our Spanish-language blog that was launched in 2015 to serve provide our Spanish-speaking audience with the same community of support) enable women to share their stories and experiences in a safe place and allow those who are not yet public with their HIV status to engage with others while remaining anonymous.

One of the hallmarks of *AGLM* and *UCCY* is that they bring together women from backgrounds that reflect diversity of geography, socio-economics, race, age, sexual orientation, and religion, allowing them to focus on all they have in common, rather than the differences that separate them. To date, we have posted more than 700 blogs from 80 bloggers from 14 countries around the world. These bloggers write about a tremendous range of topics that are relevant to women everywhere. In fact, *AGLM* and *UCCY* have been the launching pads for many women to begin their paths and careers into HIV advocacy—including some very well-known advocates!

The Well Project is committed to continuing to expand *AGLM* and *UCCY*. In 2017 we published more than 80 blogs, which were viewed by more than 60,000 people around the world. These blogs addressed issues of real importance in women's lives, including intimate partner and domestic violence, HIV criminalization, getting pregnant, mental health issues, stigma, and sexuality, as well as many everyday experiences, which are important for women living with HIV to share with each other. Each year, we renew our commitment to add new bloggers who represent the diversity of the HIV epidemic, with a special focus on women from the U.S. South, long-term survivors, young women, trans women, and women of color living with HIV.

The Well Project was created to provide women with all the information about HIV that they need to make decisions about their health and their lives. *AGLM* and *UCCY* have added the element of support that was missing for so many women and as a result has become one of The Well Project's most important and valued resources.

#communitysupport





**“ At The Well Project,  
people read our stories,  
see us speaking, and engage  
with us on social media.  
They see that we are strong,  
healthy women living with HIV  
and this gives them hope.”**

*-- Maria Mejia, global ambassador*

Building  
**HOPE...**  
one woman at a time



## NEXT STEPS

### The Well Project has a successful history of empowering and affecting our users

and we are eager to continue to expand our impact. As a global resource leveraging technology to improve health outcomes and increase the quality of life for women affected by HIV, our goals include:

- Providing women with **information** specific to their needs, identities, and circumstances
- Facilitating networking and **community** support
- Advancing **advocacy** and capacity-building among women living with HIV (WLHIV)

We aim to continuously increase our capacity to better serve our global community. In the coming year, we plan to do so by:

- Maintaining and enhancing our online resources and programs that fill key gaps and add value to the overall HIV response
- Expanding the reach of our programs
- Evaluating and measuring the impact of our programs on the lives of WLHIV

While every community is affected by HIV, some are disproportionately impacted, have less support, and face more significant obstacles to accessing care and information. It is our goal in 2018 to expand the use of our resources among those communities, including women in the U.S. South, trans women, young women, long-term survivors, and women of color.

At the end of 2017, we launched Building H.O.P.E., which is focused on reaching and engaging newly diagnosed women and WLHIV who are not currently in care or part of a support network. In the coming year, the Building H.O.P.E. team will undertake dedicated efforts to increase awareness of The Well Project's resources among the most underserved communities of women, conducting outreach in key states and developing partnerships with a wide variety of agencies and organizations. We expect that this program will significantly broaden access to The Well Project's resources among women who need them the most.

We will continue to build partnerships and leadership among WLHIV. We are proud to lift up our sister, mission-aligned organizations and look forward to expanding those efforts in the coming year. We will also continue to support the development of our community advisory board members and bloggers through meeting attendance and advocacy-building programming.

In 2018 we will also develop a strategic plan to guide the organization over the coming five years. This will provide a blueprint for how we will grow from 2018-2023. Over the last several years The Well Project's reach has increased significantly and we are committed to ensuring our growth continues, until every woman who wants it has access to all of the information, support, and advocacy she needs to live the life she wants.

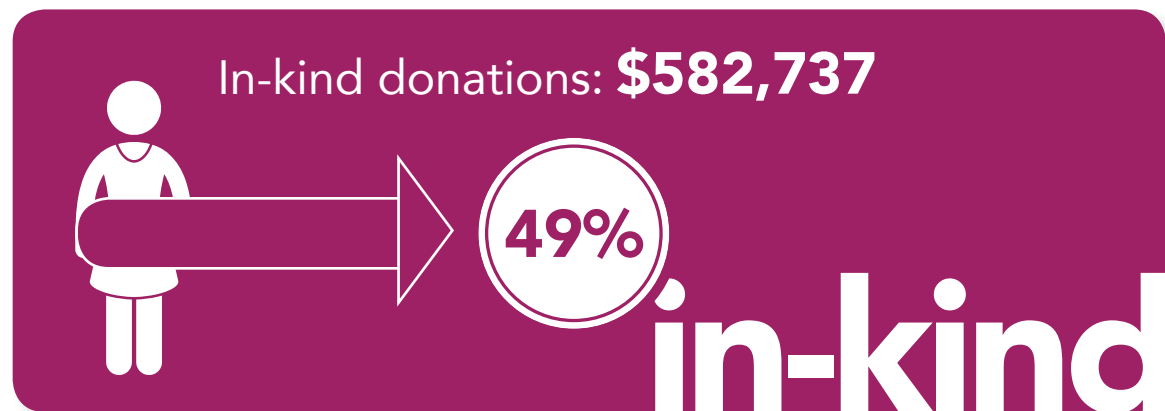
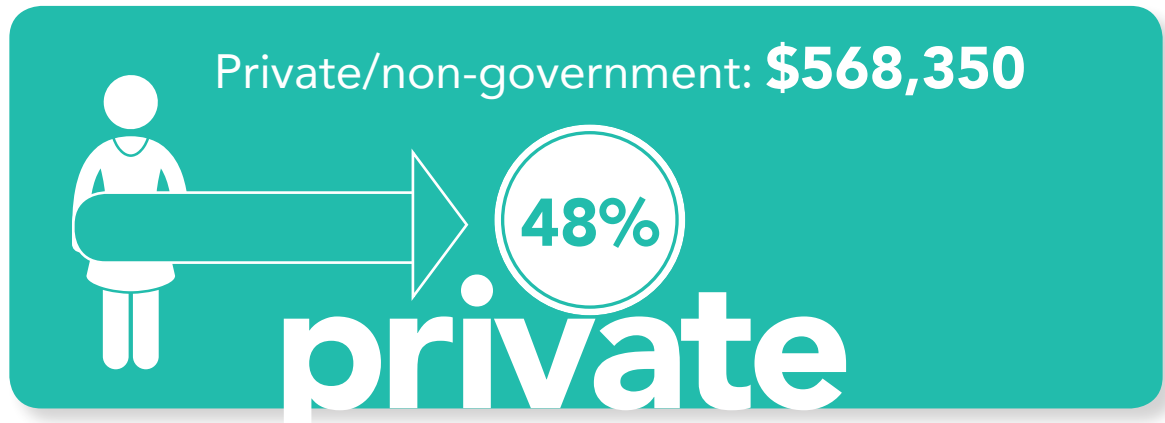
#lookingahead





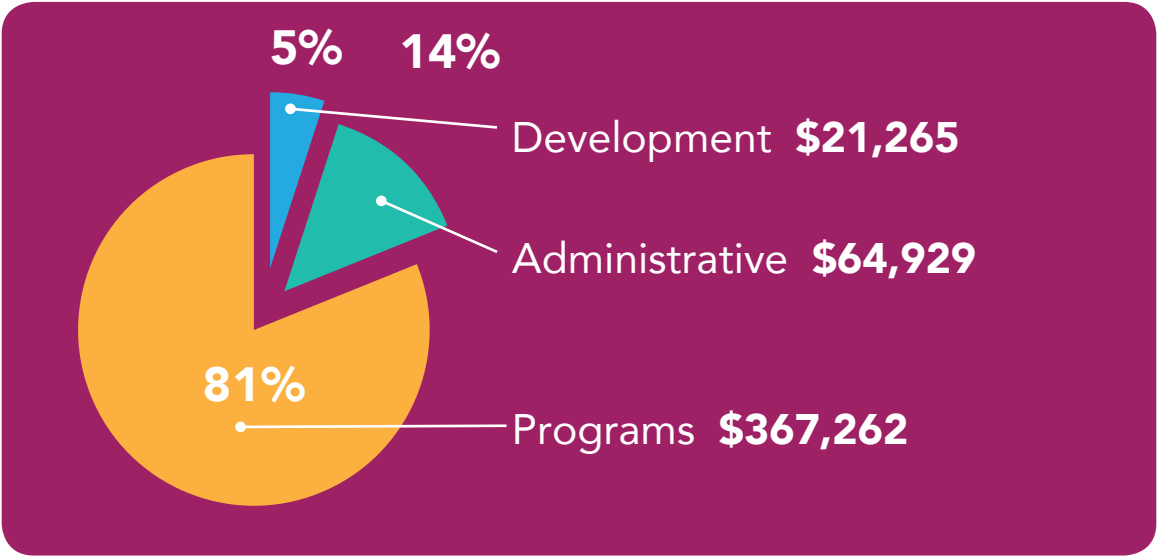
## FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Sources of Revenue: TOTAL=\$1,178,500

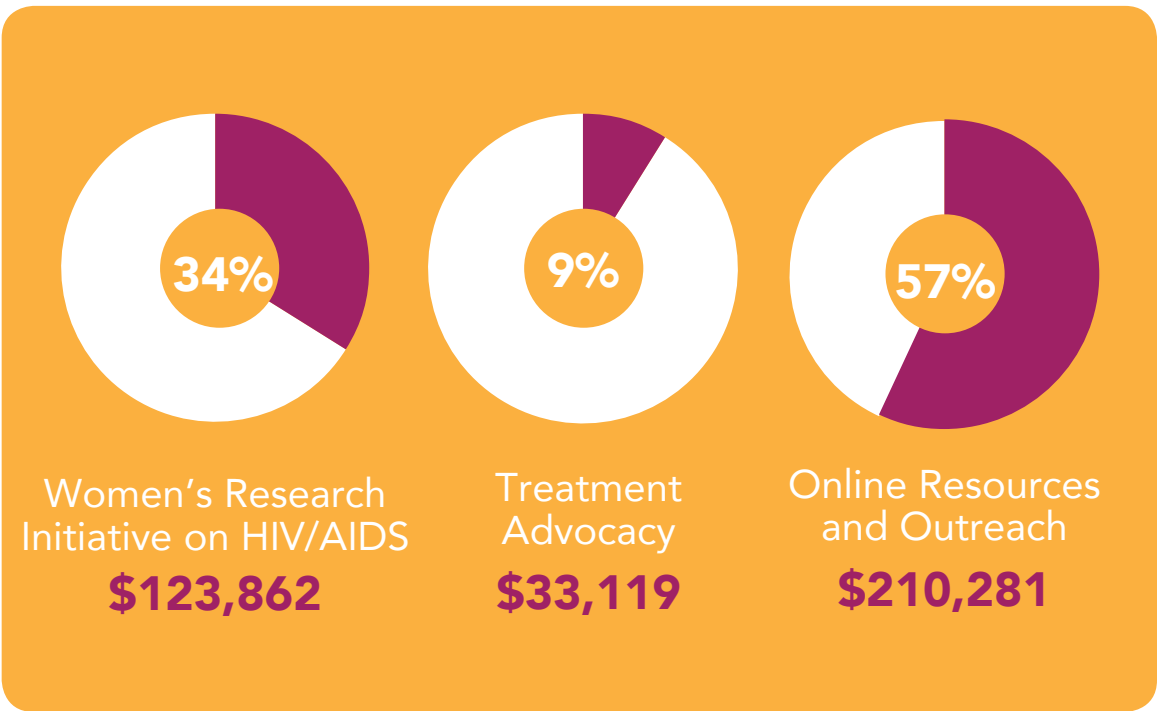




Expenditures by Function\*: \$453,456



Expenditures by Program: \$367,262



*\*Does not include non-cash expenditures from in-kind donations of \$582,737.*





## 2017 SUPPORTERS

### GRANTORS

*We are profoundly grateful to the following organizations that support The Well Project through grants.*

- Bristol-Myers Squibb
- Broadway Cares/Equity Fight AIDS
- Gilead Sciences
- Janssen Therapeutics
- Merck
- ViiV Healthcare Positive Action Community Grants
- ViiV Healthcare Positive Action for Women

### IN-KIND DONORS

*These individuals and organizations donate their services, lending their expertise and resources to our programming.*

- Judith D. Auerbach, PhD
- Google Ad Grants
- Tonia Poteat, PhD
- Kim Reed
- Stancil & Company
- Translators without Borders
- Underwood & Roberts

### DONORS

*The Well Project's annual fundraising drive raises awareness about the organization, expands our funding base, and supports our activities. We would like to thank everyone who donated in 2017 – your support was vital to our work.*

Anonymous	Mike Conley	Mary Jo Hoyt	Alan Posner
Erika Aaron	Susan Conley	Robert Jimenez	Tonia Poteat
Mark Abramson	Elizabeth Connick, MD	Robert Johnson	Julie Price
Karen Ammentorp	John Crittenden	Jennifer Kates	Kim Reed
Matthew Ammentorp	Jeffrey Crowley	Rosi Kerr	Paula Reinman
Dr. Kathryn Anastos	Steven DeCherrie &	Rosalie Kerr	Bruce Richman
Judy Auerbach	Kelly Marek	John S Kerr	Nick Roxborough
Harry Auerbach	Kiran Dixit	Anthony C Kibort	Tara Sansone
Dawn Averitt	Mary Durand	Barbara Kimport	Marlene Saritzky
Richard Averitt	Becky Fine-Firesheets	Jeannette Levenstein	Marilyn Shifflett
Sarah and Alan Bedford	James Fishel	Derrick Lynch	Patty Smail
Dee Bell	Steve and Peggy Griffith	Jeanne Martel	Peter Taback
Kelly A. Bower	Don and Sue Heitzman	Larissa Martell	Melissa Tischler
Jennifer Brownstein	Bob and Della Heitzman	Kenneth H. Mayer	Fulvia Veronese
Lakeysa Buchanan	Michael Heitzman	Julie Moskovitz	Christine Williams
Carol Cantor	Virginia Hesse	Terry Muilenburg	Charles Wira
Jenna Conley	Melissa Hicks	Linda Nagaoka	Kenneth M Wyner
Thorne Conley	Joe Hollendonner	Jim and Beth Pastor	



## PARTNERS

**We are honored to work with organizations that share our vision of connecting women and girls living with HIV** across the globe to each other and to lifesaving information. Now, more than ever before, it is vital that we work together, lift up each other's work, and strengthen our voices as a united front.

- Advocates for Youth
- AIDS Foundation of Chicago
- AIDS United
- Arianna's Center
- ATHENA
- Be-PrEPared
- Christie's Place
- Empowered/Greater than AIDS
- HIVE
- Iris House
- National Black Leadership Commission on AIDS, Inc.
- National Women and AIDS Collective
- National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day/Office of Women's Health
- Please Call Me by My True Names
- Positive Women's Network – USA
- POZ
- Prevention Access Campaign (U=U)
- Project Inform
- SisterLove, Inc.
- SMART
- The Women's Collective
- TheBody.com
- Transgender Law Center
- Translators without Borders
- U.S. Women and PrEP Working Group
- Until There's a Cure
- Women's HIV Program at UCSF
- W.O.R.L.D.

"The Well Project joined the U=U campaign early and enthusiastically. We have been so impressed by The Well Project's **global leadership and commitment to sharing the U=U information accurately, meaningfully, and urgently** to dismantle stigma and bring hope to women and girls living with HIV. And we are grateful beyond measure that The Well Project has **helped grow U=U from a campaign into a global movement.**"

-- Bruce Richman, Founder, Prevention Access Campaign

#gratitude





# LEADERSHIP

## Team

- Kelly Bower, *operations manager*
- Jenna Conley, *communications director*
- Jennifer Ferre, *translation consultant*
- Lisa Fitzpatrick, MD, *medical editor*
- Olivia G. Ford, *consulting editor*
- Darlene Harden-Fuller, *art director*
- Juliana Hawawini Johnson, *web coordinator*
- Tiommi Jenae Luckett, *communications consultant*
- Krista Martel, *executive director*
- Maria Mejia, *global ambassador*
- Theresa Mack, MD, MPH, *medical editor*
- Bose Olotu, *global ambassador*
- Lauren Richey, MD, MPH, *medical editor*

## Board of directors

- Judith D. Auerbach, PhD, *board co-chair, University of California, San Francisco*
- Dawn Averitt, *emeritus board member, founder*
- Richard Averitt, *board co-chair, co-founder*
- Abby Charles, *board treasurer and secretary, Institute for Public Health Innovation*
- Jennifer Kates, PhD, *Kaiser Family Foundation*
- Kim Reed, *Reed International Law & Consulting, LLC*
- Melissa Tischler, *Fahrenheit 212*

## Community advisory board

- Michelle Anderson, *Texas, United States*
- Kimberly Canady, *New York, United States*
- Gina Brown, MSW, *Louisiana, United States*
- Jyoti Dhawale-Surve, *India*
- Arianna Lint, *Florida, United States*
- Aryah Lester, *Washington, DC, United States*
- Tiommi Jenae Luckett, *Arkansas, United States*
- Vicki Lynn, *Florida, United States*
- Maria Mejia, *Florida, United States*
- Bose Olotu, *Nigeria*
- Masonia Traylor, *Georgia, United States*

## WRI advisory board

- Judith D. Auerbach, PhD, *University of California, San Francisco*
- Dawn Averitt, *founding director*
- Jenna Conley, *The Well Project*
- Lisa Fitzpatrick, MD, *PPH, Inc.*
- Jennifer Kates, PhD, *Kaiser Family Foundation*
- Krista Martel, *The Well Project*
- Charles Wira, PhD, *Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth*





**Join us.** *Together we can change the course of the HIV epidemic...one woman at a time.*

Visit **[www.thewellproject.org](http://www.thewellproject.org)** to sign up for our newsletters and access:



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**888-616-WELL**

**#information**



**#community**



**#advocacy**

**To find out how you can make a tax-deductible donation or support The Well Project, please contact [kmartel@thewellproject.org](mailto:kmartel@thewellproject.org).**

**#connect**





**#onewomanatathetime**